



North Carolina Coastal Reserve and National Estuarine Research Reserve  
North Carolina Division of Coastal Management

Currituck Banks Reserve Local Advisory Committee Meeting

Friday, December 1, 2017  
10 am – 12pm

Outer Banks Center for Wildlife Education  
P.O. Box 502  
1160 Village Lane  
Corolla, NC 27927

**Attendance**

<b><u>LAC Partner Organization Members</u></b>	<b><u>Present</u></b>
NC Wildlife Resources Commission, Steve Jarvis	Yes
NC Wildlife Resources Commission, Anna Barbosa	Yes
Currituck County Sheriffs Office, Susan Johnson	Yes
Currituck County Planning Department, Jennie Turner	Yes
The Nature Conservancy, Aaron McCall	Yes
Currituck National Wildlife Refuge, Mike Hoff	No
NC Wildlife Resources Commission, Sharon Meade	Yes
<b><u>Community Members and Community Organizations Members</u></b>	
None	
<b><u>Others Present</u></b>	
Kate Jones, Northern Sites Manager, NCNERR	Yes
Rachel Veal, Stewardship Assistant, NCNERR	Yes

**Reserve-wide Administrative Update (Site Manager)**

- *Rules Review*

Rules that were discussed in Spring of 2016 have been made available for public comment and have received 1 comment in support. These rules have been approved and must now be re-adopted by DCM. *No Comments.*

- *Budget Update*

The 2018 federal budget has not yet been released. The presidential budget requested \$0 (zero) for NERRS funding, but the House appropriated \$23 million, and the Senate appropriated \$25 million in their budget proposals. For the Coastal Management budget, the President requested \$0 (zero), but the House appropriated \$45 million, and the Senate \$70 million in their budget proposals. We hope to know the outcome of federal budget negotiations some time in December. Kate recognized the Friends of the Reserve (FOR) for their work to educate representatives about the importance of the Reserve System. FOR is a non-profit organization that works to support the Coastal Reserves. *No Comments.*

- *Staffing*

The Northern Sites office of the NC Coastal Reserve and National Estuarine Research Reserve hired Rachel Veal as a Stewardship Assistant for a 6-month term. Rachel began in May of 2017. *No comments*

The NC Coastal Reserve has hired Michelle Brodeur as a Communications Specialist. Michelle is based in Beaufort, but is working with all the reserves to increase our visibility and disseminate information about the Reserves to the public. *No comments.*

- *Upcoming Reserve-wide activities include:*

- A workshop for coastal government planning for open space; Dec 05 in Plymouth, NC  
Marine Process Planning workshop; Jan 8-9 in Beaufort, NC (sponsored by APNEP)
- CCVATCH meeting for Currituck Banks; Jan in Corolla, NC
- Seeds to Shore at Rachel Carson; teaching hydroponic growing of *Spartina alterniflora* in classrooms- students will also plant their seedlings
- Experimental project at RC testing the effects of thin layer sediment placement to enhance marsh accretion; to increase resiliency of marsh to rising water levels. *No Comments.*

### **Site Update (Site Manager)**

Old Business (Follow-up from previous meetings' action items)

Rain Garden – Site manager discussed recent activities to enhance the rain garden area located in the parking lot at Currituck Banks Reserve. Weeds, debris and accumulated sand were removed from the rain garden area, and then over 20 native plants were planted in the garden. The plants were purchased from the NC Aquarium on Roanoke Island where they were propagated. *Jennie Turner asked about the status of the rain garden sign and site manager responded that a new sign is being printed and will be installed to reflect any new species that have been planted.*

Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment Tool for Coastal Habitats (CCVATCH) – The first CCVATCH meeting was held in September at the Currituck County offices in Corolla. All invited

guests attended and took part in the expert elicitation process as defined in the CCVATCH manual. Various aspects of the marsh habitat at Currituck Banks Reserve was discussed with respect to vulnerability and climate change. Supporting research was discussed and action items were identified to support the next phase of the process which is scoring stressors as they related to the coastal brackish marsh habitat. *No Comments.*

#### New Business

Parking Lot – discussion on potential options for improving issues related to use at the Currituck Banks Reserve parking lot. Site manager highlighted main problems: people not using the reserve leaving cars for extended periods of time, and visitors airing up and airing down in the lot, taking up space and leaving sand in the lot. Site manager mentioned that signage is present in the parking lot that indicates no air up and air down, and a 2-hour maximum for parking, however visitors still mis use the parking area. *Sharon Meade asked where the signs are and if they are clear. Site manager explained the location of signs, and that a 2-hour maximum sign is placed at every parking space. Susan Johnson suggested towing those that do not adhere to the 2-hour maximum for parking. Other agreed that once you start towing, some of the mis use may stop. Jennie Turner spoke about the County's commitment to install signage to designate an air up area as well as an air down area. These will be separate areas and will serve as a temporary solution to the problem. Aaron McCall asked when the next chance to update the rules is, and could it include more enforcement options for the parking lot? Site manager responded she will consider this.*

Corolla Wild Horse Fund (CWHF) Advisory board – The Reserve and the board recently developed a draft of data that the Corolla Wild Horse Fund should be collecting to better inform the Population Habitat Viability Analysis (PHVA) which is a priority for successfully managing the Corolla Wild Horses and maintaining the ecological integrity of the habitats they roam. Site manager shared a copy of the suggested data with the committee. *Aaron McCall asked if the native animals are being considered in the PHVA, and how any changes in habitat from horses will affect them. Suggested putting more wildlife cameras up to assess animal populations, and adding a row in the table to account for any other wildlife studies that would be informative.*

FOR (Friends of the Reserve) is a non-profit arm of the Coastal Reserve. All 10 North Carolina sites have FOR groups, but in recent years, membership has lagged at the Northern Sites. Recently involvement has increased and we currently have three board members working to contact local businesses and raise money and awareness for Kitty Hawk Woods: Bo Dame, Kathy Mitchell, and Lindsey Dubbs. *No Comments.*

The Reserve will be seeking applications in January of 2018 for LAC members. Any current members that have been a part of the LAC since before 2013 will need to re-apply. The Reserve strives to have a membership that reflects the following: Recreational Users, Traditional Users, Citizen at Large, Potential Volunteer, Adjacent Property Owner, and Commercial User. Site Manager asks for any suggestions for community and partner members be sent to her. *No comments.*

## Roundtable

- Anna Barbosa (WRC)- things have been slow since summer season passed and not too many hunting violations in general. Near Currituck Banks, on USFW property, several hunters were target shooting and were ticketed. Is it possible to put Currituck Banks in the gamelands program? Doing so would increase WRC ability to enforce violations and would provide consistency across parcel lines. (TNC)
- Aaron McCall (TNC) – supportive of Currituck Banks going in to the gameland program. Also, he is available to go out soon and mark boundaries to clarify for hunters. Sign may be down on the beach side too. May need to designate and ingress/egress trail for hunters moving forward. It is getting very thick and overgrown, and not as accessible.
- Susan Johnson (Currituck Sheriff) – retiring soon, and will send contact for sheriff's office replacement for the LAC committee. Sgt. Terrance Sutton will be the new member.
- Jennie Turner (Currituck planning) – County would like to re-engage the state on a potential land swap, and move the ramp north on the new county property (formerly USFW) where a new parking lot and air up/air down facility could be located.

Public Input - None

Final Comments – None

Review of Action Items –

Kate and Aaron will mark boundaries at the north end of Currituck Banks and near the beach area.

Kate will replace rain garden sign in parking lot, and begin enforcing towing as directed by DCM.

Kate will have a conversation with DCM about Currituck Banks going into the gamelands systems.

Adjourn